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# A Brief History of the Temperance Movement in London and the Surrounding Area

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## **A Brief History of the Temperance Movement in London and the Surrounding Area**

Marvin L. Simner

**A**t one time in the mid-to-late 1800s, there were as many as 11 temperance lodges in London, Ontario along with a local chapter of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The majority of the lodges, which typically met on a weekly basis, represented three of the major national temperance organizations in North America: Sons of Temperance, Independent Order of Good Templars, and the British American Order of Good Templars which was founded here in London. The aim of this report is to outline the nature and accomplishments of these lodges and their national affiliates along with the WCTU.

The first part of the report will review the need for such organizations while the second part will focus on the lodges and their membership requirements, rituals, etc. The third part will deal with the WCTU and a petition approved during their fourth provincial convention, held in London in 1881, which had a significant impact on the Ontario school curriculum. The final sections will consider the outreach program of the lodges and the overall impact of the temperance movement itself in promoting two provincially endorsed prohibition eras in London and the surrounding community, the first around 1885 and the second in 1916.

### **The Need for Temperance Organizations**

In the early 1830s, London, with a population of around 1,300, already had seven taverns. By 1864, and now with a population of around 14,000, the number of licenced taverns had grown to 58.<sup>1</sup> Then, in the year of Confederation, the London Board of Police issued four more licences which meant that by 1867 there was one tavern for every 225 citizens.<sup>2</sup>

Since many of these establishments were clustered in the downtown area around King Street, this street soon became known as "whiskey row." In addition to licenced establishments there were also a number of unlicenced establishments in hotels and grocery stores where liquor could be purchased, to say nothing of the numerous inns and stagecoach stops in the surrounding countryside where whisky was also readily available. For instance, there were some 40 taverns on the 65-mile road between London and Goderich.<sup>3</sup> It was also not uncommon to find advertisements such as the following in the local paper: "Just received on Consignment 150 barrels of Blackwood's Superior Whiskey for sale, Cheap for Cash. Enquire of J. M. Bennett, at the Robinson Hall".<sup>4</sup> In view of such easy access to liquor it is not surprising that the level of drinking

that frequently occurred in London led to considerable brawling and rowdy behaviour. Rev. William Proudfoot recorded one such instance in his diary on November 17, 1832, during his visit to the fledgling community.

Had an opportunity to-day of hearing a great deal of profane swearing, and of a kind that appeared peculiarly shocking, and that too from persons of whom I expected better things...I was told that the people of this district are exceedingly careless and profane and that very many are addicted to drinking...Was also told when young men and even middle aged men meet in a tavern, they cannot sit and talk as Old Country people do, but they are all on their legs revelling and pulling at one another. They seem to be just big boys. Witnessed today many proofs of this. The room next to the one I occupied was frequently full of people making all imaginable noises, laughing, swearing, tumbling on the floor, shoving one another about.

The manner of drinking spirits is very different here from what it is in the Old Country. Here a person or two come to the bar, buy a glass of liquor, and stand and drink it off, wander about the bar room awhile and saunter off, perhaps to a bar of another tavern. There is no sociality of a rational kind, no conversation, no sentiment---it is the most irrational way of buying a glass I have ever seen.<sup>5</sup>

Further highlighting the extent of the drinking problem in London, of the many cases heard before the local Court of Quarter Sessions, alcohol intoxication was by far the

most common offence. For example, in 1855 the Court heard 299 cases of drunkenness and only 181 cases of assault and 25 cases of larceny.<sup>6</sup> In fact, to emphasize the seriousness of this problem *The Royal Commission on Liquor Traffic* issued a report which showed that, in 1893, London had the second highest arrest rate for drunkenness of the 21 Canadian cities with a population greater than 10,000.<sup>7</sup> And, according to Richardson (2005), “virtually every page of the early minutes of the Board of Police Commissioners had one or more officers being reprimanded or discharged, usually for being drunk on duty.”<sup>8</sup>

To make the public aware of the magnitude of the problem, graphic accounts of public intoxication appeared almost daily in the local press. Although it was certainly the case that excessive drinking was far more common among males than females, the following examples from the fall 1864 issues of the *London Free Press and Daily Western Advertiser* illustrate that the problem of public intoxication was independent of gender.

Conrad Fleming was brought up for being drunk and creating a nuisance, Conrad is the pioneer of toppers and when drunk, is a nuisance to the constables and everybody else. Having been frequently before the court, he was awarded 30 days in limbo.<sup>9</sup>

Sarah North, who, by the way, out of 365 days in the year, spent 350 in jail, appeared to answer to the charge of being drunk. The Magistrate asked Sarah if she had anything to say. The female replied “nary”, and was ordered to jail for 60 days remarking that she would sooner go there than walk to her home in Vienna.<sup>10</sup>

As was predicted in these columns yesterday, Annie Sturgeon, the indefatigable punisher of whiskey ...appeared in the Police Court charged with being at her old tricks and raising a rumpus...Annie said she was as good as any other woman, and that if she drank liquor she did not ask the city to pay for it...and further, that she was going to take a decided stand and dispute the rights of magistrates to try her. She, however, would not offend again, and begged to be excused. The old plea and promise were unsuccessful, for the charming inebriate went to jail for 60 days.<sup>11</sup>

For some days past a man named Hugh Hodson has been roaming about the city in a state of drunkenness continually lying about in the way. On Thursday he was before the Police Court for being a nuisance, but on promising to leave the city he was sent about his business. On his dismissal, he again took to his old habits, and yesterday morning was found by the Chief of Police in the gateway of the G.W.R. on his knees doing penance and giving vent to the most doleful lamentations. On being taken before Ald. Hughes, he was sent to jail for 30 days. The individual will be remembered by our citizens as having been formerly a man of literary acquirements, who peddled old books and often pestered them to buy.<sup>12</sup>

Not only did excessive drinking lead to disorderly conduct, it was also said to be a major cause of other ills such as child abandonment. The following comment appeared in a letter to the editor in the

*London Advertiser*: "I suppose the citizens think that nearly all the children in the Protestant Orphans Home are orphans, but such is not the fact. Only three have neither father nor mother, whilst seven-eighths of them are the children of drunken parents."<sup>13</sup> On occasion, even the cause of death was attributed to overindulgence: "An Inquest was held on Thursday last, on view of the body of Lawrence Scanlin, found dead in his bed at the Mansion House, Dundas Street. The verdict given by the Jury was excessive drinking."<sup>14</sup> And in April, 1863 the *Free Press* printed the following notice: "upon the examination of the body of one Mrs. Marshall who died very suddenly...the Jury returned a verdict of Died from Intemperance."<sup>15</sup>

Needless to say, this brief review offers merely a sample of the material on the evils of excessive drinking that the public was exposed to throughout the nineteenth century. In an effort to combat these evils many enraged citizens formed temperance societies, the aim of which was, if not the outright prohibition of alcohol, at the very least a moderate, restrained, or temperate use of intoxicating beverages among the population at large. The societies themselves, although having a Christian orientation, were largely non-denominational, middle-class fellowships with a highly restricted membership, a set of clearly expressed obligations, along with secret passwords and formal rituals. Contrary to what might be assumed, however, according to their by-laws, their goal was not to help those who were already destitute and seriously addicted to alcohol. Instead, their aim was to prevent addiction from taking root among those who were known to be sober upstanding citizens. This aim was

clearly articulated in *The Book of Laws* published by the Sons of Temperance: "We have found it far easier and far more effectual to throw safeguards around the innocent than to extricate men who have once fallen into the pitfall of intemperance, or to preserve them afterwards from a relapse."<sup>16</sup> In short, the lodges were principally fraternal bodies similar in most respects to many of the other secret and benevolent societies that existed in London at the time, such as the Freemasons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Knights of Malta, and Ancient Order of Foresters, to name a few (for a complete list of these societies see the *London and Middlesex Directory* published in the 1880s). The major difference between these other societies and the temperance organizations was the total devotion of the latter to the elimination of alcohol consumption. What follows is a description of the major temperance organizations that began to operate in London between the 1850s and the 1870s.<sup>17</sup>

### Sons of Temperance

The national division of the Sons of Temperance was established in New York City in 1842. By 1850, when the local division was formed, the overall national membership had grown to more than 200,000.<sup>18</sup> The London chapter, known as the Pioneer Division, held its initial meetings on the third floor of the Wellington Buildings on Richmond Street. By the late 1850s, early 1860s, when the local division had grown to 80 plus members, it met on a weekly basis in Temperance Hall in the Albion Buildings, located on the west side of Richmond Street north of Carling. To fully understand the nature and purpose of this

organization the following remarks are from the preamble to their Constitution.

We, whose names are annexed, desirous of forming an association to enable us more effectively to protect ourselves and others from the evils of intemperance, afford mutual assistance, and to elevate our characters, do pledge ourselves to be governed by the following...No member shall make, buy, sell or use as a beverage any Spirituous or Malt Liquors, Wine, or Cider.<sup>19</sup>

The nature of this pledge was further defined in the first two sections of their Code, reproduced below, which was also in the Constitution,<sup>20</sup> and which all members were expected to support under threat of expulsion. Section 2 is particularly noteworthy since even if a member consumed alcohol for medicinal purposes, as advised by his physician, the member would be asked to resign.

Section 1- The manufacture, sale and use of cider or wine, etc...whether enumerated in the pledge or not, is a violation of the same, and the simple fact of the manufacture, sale or use, of such drinks by a member shall be *prima facie* evidence against such member ... A member so accused would then face trial and would be required to prove their innocence or forfeit their membership.

Section 2 - A physician's certificate or prescription shall not necessarily relieve a member from a charge of violation of the pledge, as the internal

use of the liquors prohibited by the pledge is in no way provided for by our laws.

To join a local division a person had to be nominated by an existing member. To be nominated, one “must be 14 years of age and upward, possessing a character for integrity, and who has not been rejected by, or expelled from any other Division, within six months...” Once nominated, three other members were asked to investigate the candidate. Following the investigation the character of the candidate would often be discussed by the membership as a whole. Final admission was determined through an election that consisted of a “ball ballot...if a majority of white balls and not more than four black balls appear, [the candidate] shall be declared elected; but if five or more black balls appear, [the candidate] shall be rejected and so declared.”

To ensure that the significance of the election was fully appreciated, the candidate would then undergo a formal initiation ceremony described in considerable detail in yet another publication produced by the Sons.<sup>21</sup> The ceremony took place within the main lodge room and was presided over by six officers each of whom was clothed in formal regalia. The candidate, located in an outside ante-room, was told to knock, one time only, on a door leading to the main lodge room. At the sound of the knock the officer in charge, known as the Worthy Patriarch, began the ceremony using the following scripted dialogue.

**Worthy Patriarch:** “The Assistant Conductor will see if there are any Candidates to be initiated.”

**Assistant Conductor:** [proceeds to the ante-room door and says] “Worthy Patriarch ...[name]...is in waiting.”

**Worthy Patriarch:** “Recording Scribe, has the Candidate been elected?”

**Recording Scribe:** “He has.”

**Worthy Patriarch:** “The Assistant Conductor will now conduct our Worthy Associate and Financial Scribe to the ante-room to perform their duties.”

**Worthy Associate:** “My friend, you are at the threshold of an institution, the central principle of which is Total Abstinence from all Intoxicating Drinks, and whose prominent characteristic is a self-denying devotion to the good of Mankind. On entering our Order, you will be required to take a solemn obligation to abstain from the manufacture, traffic, and use, as a beverage, of all Spirituous and Malt Liquors, Wine and Cider. Our object is to annihilate the sale and use of these drinks; and you may be assured that your religious and political opinions will not be interfered with. After this avowal of our obligation and object, is it your desire to become a Member of our Order?”

**Candidate:** “It is.”

**Worthy Associate:** “Please be seated until I report...Worthy Patriarch, the Candidate is qualified and willing to proceed.”



**Financial Scribe:** “Worthy Patriarch the fee is paid.”

**Worthy Patriarch:** “The members will observe the utmost decorum during the Ceremony of Initiation. This is a most important service and merits our closest attention. Let the signal be given.”

At this point the Recording Scribe would knock once on the door. Upon hearing this signal the Assistant Conductor would lead the candidate, who is still in the ante-room, to the door of the main lodge room and knock twice. The candidate would enter the main lodge room and be led around the room to the singing and chanting of the other members of the division. After hearing the members recite a number of verses pertaining to the evils of drinking and once again swearing to honour the pledge, the candidate would finally be officially admitted to the Division.

**Worthy Patriarch:** “Confiding in your integrity, I now invest you with this regalia, and proclaim you a member of our Order. Wear it as an emblem of Virtue wear it proudly! In the name of this great Fraternity I charge you, defend it! By the recollection of the past, the dignity of the present, and solemnity of the future, I invoke you to guard it from dishonour.”

The ceremony continued with additional singing along with further admonitions to avoid drinking and to maintain the other major principle of the Order, namely, “a self denying devotion to the good of Mankind.” The ceremony ended with the following

remarks by the Chaplain and the gathering of all the members in a Circle of Fraternity around the newly initiated member. The purpose of the circle was to symbolise that the newest member had entered a family to help him maintain his pledge of temperance and his devotion to the good of mankind.

**Chaplain:** “There is no vice which swallows up so much of hope and happiness as Intemperance. It destroys the tenderest ties of social life, and exiles the sweet endearments of home. It breathes upon the holy affections, and they are blasted...Remember that life is brief. Whatever your hands find to do for the good of mankind, do quickly for the night cometh when no one can work. May your course be full of joy to others and when your own star shall set at life’s close, may it set as the Morning Star, which goeth not down behind the darkened West, but melts away into the brightness of heaven.”

The length of the ceremony is perhaps best appreciated by the fact that in the *Blue Book* the opening segment, which was only briefly outlined above, required ten full pages of dialogue to complete. Following this segment, several more full pages of dialogue were devoted to the remaining portion of the ceremony before the actual initiation rite took place. Once accepted the candidate was recognized as a member in good standing and therefore became eligible to run for office (if 18 years of age or older), serve on committees, receive a Travelling Card and password, which enabled him to attend meetings in other divisions, and receive the benefits mentioned below.

Because backsliding, or failure to abide by the oath, was always a possibility, if married, the wife of a member was given an important role to play which was also clearly defined in *The Book of Laws*. The husband, wife and their children were to meet as a family in a specially designed room located in the lodge. During these meetings the wife would acquire certain skills that she was expected to employ at home to insure that her husband would maintain his pledge of temperance regardless of the temptations to resort to alcohol that might arise during periods of anxiety and stress. Thus, by emphasizing the importance of her husband's emotional commitment to her and to his family it was hoped that she would be able to curtail his quest to indulge in an intoxicating beverage.

The Order wisely avails itself of the co-operation of woman...The Division room possesses the charm of a temperance home. Here, father, mother and children sit side by side, just as they sit around the fire-side...Women are not mere ornaments of the Division room; they do not merely aid by their presence in preserving the purity, the dignity and decorum of the assembly; but they have an equal share in the responsibility and the work...they taste the pleasure and the benefits of temperance instruction and recreation...our Order endeavours to cement the natural ties of life more firmly. Indeed the whole Division is a family group...bound to each other in Love, Purity and Fidelity.<sup>22</sup>

Should this procedure fail and backsliding occur, the other members of the Order were encouraged to report any fellow members who, in their judgement, were unable to keep the pledge.<sup>23</sup> To gather the names of potential backsliders, at the start of each meeting, those in attendance were asked "Has any member violated the Pledge?"

A member who has good reason to believe that a [fellow] member has violated the Pledge...shall prefer a charge in writing stating the nature of the offence, the time, place and circumstances, as near as may be, of its commission.

If a member [so accused] acknowledges a violation of the Pledge, the Worthy Patriarch shall declare forfeited all honours previously earned by such member, and then proceed immediately to call for a ballot on the question of expulsion. If a majority ballot in favour, the Worthy Patriarch shall declare the member expelled, and order the Financial Scribe to erase the name from the books.

For members, expulsion was an extremely serious punishment. When a person became a member he was entitled to a number of important benefits. During sickness other members of the division, who had previously been assigned to a Visiting Committee, were required to attend the member at home and provide any necessary support that the member might require. When a member died, the funeral was arranged with the cost covered by the division and the widow was entitled to a financial settlement, perhaps in the form of



an annuity. Should a member outlive his wife he too would be entitled to receive financial aid. In view of these benefits, it is not surprising that the threat of expulsion or forced resignation was taken very seriously and was one of the most important factors that held the division together.

As the divisions grew in size the cost of these benefits became a serious financial burden. To address this matter, in 1888 the Sons developed more restrictive membership requirements in that now individual divisions that desired to do so were permitted to require a health certificate of prospective members to help insure that the person would not be in need of financial care any time soon. Other secret societies in Ontario that offered similar benefits to their members, such as the Odd Fellows, also adopted the same regulation around this time.<sup>24</sup>

### **Independent Order of Good Templars**

The Independent Order of Good Templars (IOGT) was founded in 1851 in Oneida County, New York. The first Canadian chapter was established somewhat later during an organizational meeting held in Hamilton, Ontario.<sup>25</sup> According to the *London City Directory*, in 1863/64 the IOGT had one lodge in London that met on a weekly basis in the Albion Buildings on Richmond Street. By 1878/79 the London Order had six lodges that met either weekly, biweekly, or monthly at different locations throughout the city. This level of growth was evident throughout the province such that by 1874 the IOGT had more than 34,000 members in Ontario alone.<sup>26</sup>

While similar in overall organizational structure, several factors set the IOGT apart from the Sons of Temperance.

Unlike the Sons of Temperance which favoured males, and allowed females to be admitted, but only under certain conditions ("females shall not be admitted ...unless the Division shall so decide by a two-thirds vote, after two weeks notice"), almost from the start, males and females were equally eligible to become members, to run for office and to obtain the higher degrees recognized by the order. Despite the seemingly equalitarian nature of IOGT, owing to its extreme devotion to the need for temperance, membership was strictly controlled based on occupation. For example, "An individual employed as a porter in an establishment where liquor is sold, and who has to convey to and from said establishment liquors of various kinds cannot be received as a member of our Order....We would (also) exclude the proprietor of a newspaper who advertises for the liquor establishment."<sup>27</sup> In short, the IOGT excluded individuals for whom there was even a remote possibility that they might support the use of alcohol. They even considered at one time the need to exclude people such as elected representatives who had the responsibility of granting licences to sell intoxicating liquors.

It was also the case that following initiation the IOGT placed many more restrictions on its members than did the Sons of Temperance. A separate section of the IOGT constitution contained a list of 65 possible violations and offenses many of which would lead to a reprimand, fine, suspension or even expulsion. While most of these applied directly to the pledge,(e.g., the use of brandy in cooking) others had a more indirect application, such as the selling of grain, knowing that it is to be used for the purpose of distillation, and still others had no immediate application but were also

considered grounds for possible expulsion (e.g., playing billiards, or engaging in other games of chance where anything is at stake as well as the use of profane or obscene language). In short, the IOGT exerted considerable control over most of the daily activities of its members thereby attempting to instil, not only total abstinence, but an overall sense of morality that would influence the community as a whole.

### **British American Order of Good Templars**

As mentioned above, the British American Order of Good Templars (BAOGT) was founded here in London. It formed in 1858 as a breakaway division of the IOGT largely as the result of a dispute over doctrine. By 1877 there were two lodges in London. The Weston Lodge met every Monday evening in a building at the corner of Adelaide and King Street while the Forest City Lodge met every Thursday evening in Temperance Hall on Richmond Street.

The reason for the dispute was summarized in a letter by Rev. James Scott, Grand Worthy Chaplain of the BAOGT, addressed to Rev. Vannorman, an official of the Hamilton chapter of the IOGT. According to the letter “the names of the Son and Holy Ghost [were expunged] from the [IOGT ritual prayer]...to suit the Unitarians of the United States of America.”<sup>28</sup> Because this action on the part of the IOGT was considered offensive to those who believed strongly in the Trinity, it was considered necessary to form a separate British division of the Good Templars. To emphasize this point Rev. Scott concluded his letter with the following statement: “I love Temperance, but I love Christianity better, and as long as God spares my life, I will never stand

associated with any organization that ignores our common Christianity.”

With these thoughts in mind, the BAOGT formed a committee to develop a new constitution. Other than the prayer associated with the ritual, this new constitution was similar in most respects to the constitution adopted by the IOGT, with one major exception. The BAOGT constitution provided for the development of Juvenile Lodges that could be established as long as at least 12 children, ranging in age from seven to fourteen, could be recruited along with four adults, male or female, who were willing to hold the offices of Worthy Guardian, Worthy Associate Guardian, Worthy Chaplain, and Worthy Treasurer in the Juvenile Lodge. When the children reached fourteen, they were expected to join the adult chapter of the BAOGT.<sup>29</sup>

The purpose of these lodges, of course, was to ensure that the youths would form a commitment to abstain from all alcoholic beverages well before any temptations to drink might arise. To accomplish this goal the Juvenile Lodges were closely modelled after the adult lodges in organizational structure, ritual, regalia, officers, and most importantly, the pledge. The initiation ceremony, which included the pledge, closely resembled the procedures followed in the adult lodges.

**Worthy Associate Guardian:** [To the candidates.] You will now repeat our pledge after me, when I repeat my name, you pronounce yours. “I\_\_\_\_\_do hereby solemnly promise to abstain from the use as a beverage of all intoxicating drinks.” [After taking the pledge, the ceremony concluded in the following manner.]

Worthy Marshal, you will take these dear children to the desk of the Worthy Secretary to sign the constitution. After which you will take them to the Worthy Guardian for the closing instructions.

**Newly Initiated Members:**

We have joined this novel army,  
And we are bound to fight;  
With our banners proudly waving,  
For Temperance and right.

**Chorus:**

We're glad we've joined this army,  
And we've battled for the right.  
Although we are small in number  
And smaller still in years;  
We will never be disheartened,  
Or yield to foolish fears.  
Then let us hurrah for freedom,  
From every slavish sin;  
And evermore let us banish,  
Rum, cider, beer and gin.

**Worthy Associate Guardian:** I [now] clothe you with this Regalia as a token of our esteem and confidence, and as co-workers with us. I now proclaim you members of this Juvenile Lodge, fully entitled to all its rights and privileges. As young soldiers in the Great Temperance Army, we trust you will prove true to your Pledge...and ever keep in mind, that it is your duty to get new recruits for this Great Temperance Army.

Needless to say, any children who joined and remained active in this "Great Temperance Army" would probably maintain their commitment to abstain from

drinking long after childhood and well into adulthood.

**The Woman's Christian Temperance Union**

The Ontario branch of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was formed as an outgrowth of a movement that started in Owen Sound in 1874 by Mary Doyle. While the temperance pledge required of all members was similar to the one employed by the lodges, unlike the lodges, the WCTU depended very little on ritual and ceremony. Instead, their major focus was on service to others which took many forms such as the need for prison reform and securing the right to vote for women.<sup>30</sup>

The first provincial convention was held in Toronto in 1877 under the leadership of Letitia Youmans of Picton. London was the host for the fourth annual convention in 1881.<sup>31</sup> London was also host to a Provincial Convention in 1885, and in 1893 May Thornley, a member of the London Chapter, was elected president of the Provincial Association. Although additional meetings were held in London in 1906 and 1921, it was during the 1881 meeting that an event took place that would profoundly influence the public's opinion on the harm of excessive drinking. During the meeting a petition was approved and subsequently submitted to the Hon. Adam Crooks, Minister of Education. The petition called for the teaching of temperance as part of the Ontario curriculum.<sup>32</sup> Although Crooks's initial response was "vague and unsatisfactory," the WCTU persisted and five years later succeeded in having the Ontario Legislature approve the publication of a textbook, entitled *Public School Temperance*,<sup>33</sup> for use throughout the public school system. Since public school attend-

ance was made compulsory in 1871, this meant that the children in Ontario would now be exposed to the arguments advanced by the major temperance organizations in Ontario on the evils of drinking. The following remarks from the preface indicate the importance that this publication was expected to have on the drinking habits of the general population.

In compliance with a well understood public opinion, an Act to provide for the teaching of Temperance in the Public Schools was introduced in the last session of the Legislature of Ontario, and received the unanimous approval of the House. Under the provisions of that Act, the subject is placed in the Programme of Public School studies; and this volume is authorized by the Department of Education as the text-book

The author of this work is the celebrated Dr. Richardson, F.R.S., F.R.C.P. of England...who is known throughout the British Empire as one of the highest authorities on this and kindred scientific subjects...The information imparted ...(is designed) to explain the effects of alcohol on the human system and to impress the pupil with the danger of its use...What is learned in childhood usually exerts an influence for life; and it is believed that this new subject will not only prove an interesting and valuable addition to our Public School course, but will have an important moral effect on the lives of the coming men and women of our country.

The book was 120 pages in length and contained 50 chapters. To convey the dangers of alcohol several chapters were devoted to vivid descriptions of the four stages the body experiences during the course of excessive drinking. The final stage was most graphic.

When a man has arrived at the fourth stage, it is said of him, in rude but expressive words, that he is "dead drunk." The near approach to actual death in which the victim of drink now lies, is completely expressed by the phrase. He is not dead but dead drunk. He is next door to dead. He is dead to the world, for he can neither hear, nor see, nor feel. His limbs, like the limbs of a dead man, drop down helpless when you raise them. He is not quite so cold as a corpse, but he is so cold the touching of him reminds you, with a shudder, of something that is corpse-like. He is indeed at the gate of death, and but for the gasping, rattling, heavy breathings, with now and then a deep snore, the unskilled looker-on would think he was dead. It happens sometimes actually that a doctor has to be called to men in this condition, in order to determine by skilled knowledge of the signs of life, whether life is or is not extinct.

I think there is no more awful spectacle for anyone to see than that of an unfortunate man or woman brought, in this manner, to the edge of the grave by their own act and deed. It were well if all young people would shrink from the thought of entering into such a condition as they would from the

thought of sinking into deep waters to drown there.<sup>34</sup>

If this warning was not sufficient to convince the reader to abstain, the following diseases were all attributed to excessive alcohol consumption and, in turn, were all said to lead to death: “apoplexy, epilepsy, paralysis, vertigo, softening of the brain, delirium tremens, dipsomania, dementia, consumption, bronchitis, irregular heartbeat, feebleness of the muscular walls, scurvy, dropsy, separation of fibrine, indigestion, flatulency, irritation of the bowels, cirrhosis of the liver, [and finally a] change of structure into fatty or waxy-like condition [followed by a] thickening and loss of elasticity, by which the parts wrapped up in the membrane are impaired for use, and premature decay is induced.”<sup>35</sup>

Capitalizing on the success of the first text book, the WCTU petitioned the government for a second authorized text that dealt with temperance and physiology which was published in 1893. Their lobbying efforts were so persistent in this regard that the Hon. George Ross, who became Minister of Education following Crooks, informed the organization that the letters WCTU stood for “Women Constantly Troubling Us.”<sup>36</sup>

## Outreach

While the lodges, throughout their existence, had extremely restrictive membership requirements, this does not mean that they did not attempt to engage the population as a whole in their aim to promote prohibition. All of the temperance organizations in London held regular meetings, many of which were open to the public and were designed to gain public support for the temperance message. As one example, the

Forest City Lodge of the British American Order of Good Templars held a “grand festival at the City Hall (in London) to which the friends of the Temperance cause and the public in general” were invited. To encourage attendance, the following inducement appeared in the press.

Mr. Erith’s accomplished little daughter will preside at the piano, while a choir of about thirty voices will sell the harmony of the choruses, and Mr. Lang will lead the air in two of the selections. After a service of fruit, a series of light and secular pieces will be introduced...Miss Jarman will also sing. The speeches will be delivered by the Revds. J. McLean, M.A.Grundy, Potts and others who will doubtless do full justice to the occasion...the speeches are cut down to ten minutes each...in order that all may be got through...All representatives, members and visitors attending the meeting will receive a certificate from the Grand Secretary to enable all persons to return to their place of destination by railroad free of charge.<sup>37</sup>

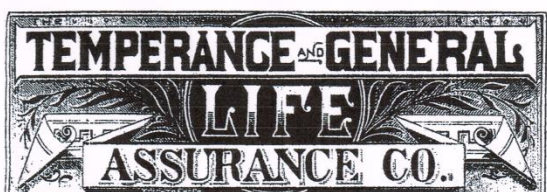
Still another lodge invited the public to a lecture in Temperance Hall in the Albion Buildings on Richmond Street. The topic, “The Pathology of Drunkenness,” stressed one of the goals of the movement which was described in the following manner.

(The lecture) will be illustrated by a series of illuminated diagrams, showing the morbid effects of alcoholic drinks upon the human stomach. These diagrams, which we have had




the pleasure of inspecting, are really admirably executed, and cannot fail to add to the success and interest of the lecture...the analysis to which it will be subjected, is one of considerable importance, especially to the young of this city, who are so easily led astray by the temptations of strong drink.<sup>38</sup>

As further evidence of outreach, several London businesses indicated their support of the movement through advertisements such as the following that appeared in the *Free Press*.



**TEMPERANCE AND GENERAL  
LIFE  
ASSURANCE CO.**



HEAD OFFICE:  
Manning Arcade, 22 to 28 King St. West

**FULL DEPOSIT**

With the Government for the  
Security of

**POLICY-HOLDERS**

**ABSOLUTE SECURITY OFFERED**

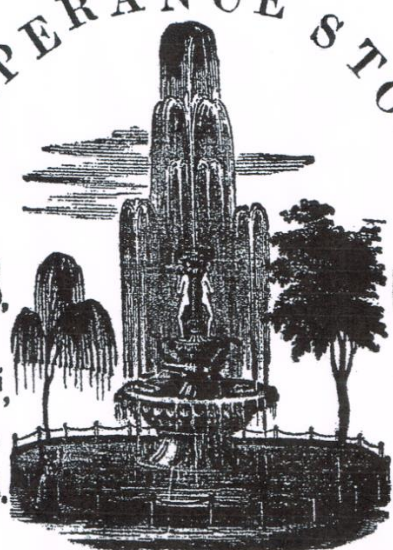
Assurance at Reasonable Rates. A choice  
of all Sound Plans of Assurance in a Safe and  
Economically Managed Company

**TOTAL ABSTAINERS**

GET THE FULL BENEFIT OF SUPERIOR LONGEVITY

**The London Temperance Coffee House,**  
3, 4 and 5 Market Square, B. Cottam, Proprietor.—  
Desirable restaurants and coffee houses form no unimportant branch in the list of public institutions in any city, and in this line London is well represented. Amongst the favorite and popular resorts is that known as the London Temperance Coffee House, which, during the seven years it has been in existence, has acquired a high reputation, where meals can be procured at a most moderate price and without the surroundings of liquors.

**TEMPERANCE STORE.**



**DRY GOODS, CROCKERY,  
Groceries, Cutlery,  
BOOTS & SHOES. SCHOOL BOOKS.**

**ROBERT WILSON**

HAS DOUBLED the size of HIS SHOP, TRIPLED his Stock of GOODS, and is very anxious to INCREASE HIS CUSTOMERS in the same ratio. To effect this, he intends to keep on hand a **LARGE STOCK OF GOODS—SELL LOW—** And deal honestly with all men. He is aware that it is fashionable for advertisers to make such boasts as “Cheaper than any House in Canada West!” “Selling off at Cost!!” And some go so far as to make it “**TWENTY-FIVE PER CENT. LOWER STILL!!!**” But he would ask—Does any one believe such unprincipled pulls? If they be true, must not the advertisers themselves speedily come to ruin, unless they have devised some means of living up in nothing, and can pay rent and clerk’s wages by a Promissory Note payable nowhere, a year after eternity? Thankful for past favours, he now informs his customers and the public that he is just receiving large and seasonable supplies of Dry Goods, Groceries, Boots and Shoes, Crockery, Cutlery, School-books, &c., which for **QUALITY and CHEAPNESS**, though others MAY EQUAL, NONE CAN EXCEL.

Dear Reader, shall he rank you among his Customers?  
London, 24th October, 1851. 148c

the local ballot. The first of the major ballots was initiated in 1868 when members of the Ontario chapters of the Independent Order of Good Templars and the Sons of Temperance joined forces to form a Canadian Temperance Union. Following three days of discussion in Temperance Hall, Toronto, each of the provinces were asked to join the Union with the ultimate aim of creating a national organization to advance the moral, religious, and political aims of the Canadian temperance movement.<sup>39</sup> Eventually all of the provinces, through the efforts of the Union, launched a crusade to support a federal bill that would prohibit the sale of intoxicating beverages. As noted above, the



rationale behind the bill had been accumulating over many years: excessive drinking was said to be a direct cause of poverty, crime, mental weakness and derangement, as well as disease and premature death. Moreover, the economic impact was said to be felt through the loss of an effective labour force coupled with an increased need for prisons and police protection.

On March 18, 1878, R. W. Scott, Secretary of State, introduced just such a bill in the Senate. The bill received final approval from the House on May 8, 1878. Known as the Canada Temperance Act, or more informally, the Scott Act, the bill had the following major features.

If a petition in favour of the bill was put forward by one-quarter of the electors in any city or county a poll of the remaining electors was required. If a majority voted in favour of the petition then neither the distribution nor sale of any intoxicating beverages, except for medicinal, sacramental, or industrial purposes, would be permitted within that particular jurisdiction. Moreover, the petition could not be revoked for three years, and then only upon a reversal of the poll. If the initial petition was not approved, no similar petition could be presented for three years.<sup>40</sup>

The Scott Act was eventually adopted throughout much of the country, and with the exception of Peel, Perth, Prince Edward, Prescott and Russell, and Wentworth, the remaining counties in Ontario all voted in favour of the Act in 1884-1885. Hence, it is safe to say that by 1885 in Ontario the consumption of alcohol in any of its forms, for the most part, was prohibited.<sup>41</sup> It is also

worth noting that the level of support in Middlesex, which approved the Act in 1885, was among the highest (5,745 voted in favour versus 2,379 voted against).

This overall degree of support throughout much of the province, however, was only temporary. In 1889, which was four years after the Scott Act was approved, another poll was taken, the aim of which was to repeal the legislation. What led to this substantial change of opinion? A number of answers were given by Francis Spence<sup>42</sup> in his summary of a report to the *Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic*. Several of the reasons cited by Spence through informal polling in Ontario are presented below.

For some time after the Act came into operation its enforcement was badly hampered by a conflict between provincial and Dominion authorities as to the duty of enforcement, and as to the right to issue licenses for permitted sale.

People who had expected the Act to suddenly reform society were disappointed, the benefits [reduction in crime, insanity, poverty, etc.] not being what they had in many cases anticipated.

The enforcement of the law necessitated the giving of evidence by witnesses against their neighbours, thus leading to much bitterness and hard feeling in districts where the law was broken and its violators prosecuted.

In many cases the men who had been engaged in the liquor business made special efforts to inconvenience the

community. Hotel-keepers locked up their houses, refusing to accommodate the travelling public, hoping thus to compel repeal of the law.

The Commission was also supplied with newspaper clippings that suggested 'terrorism was flagrant' throughout Ontario and was being carried out by those who opposed the Act. In general it was felt that prohibition had led to considerable anger within the community and attempts to enforce it had promoted a serious danger to the community. One of the clippings stated that:

Dr. Ferguson, M.P. and three other respectable citizens of Kemptville, received letters warning them against having anything to do with temperance work...Several places were dynamited... Dangerous missiles were hurled at Constable Nettleton in Warren's Hotel, Kemptville, while serving a summons [and] Constables Nettleton, Bennett, Brown and Smith were savagely assaulted at the Burrill House, Kemptville, by an immense mob.<sup>43</sup>

The *London Advertiser* also reported the following incident on May 6, 1886: "The Reeve, Deputy-Reeve and Mr Webster, of Paris, prominent in promoting the Scott Act in Brant county, and members of the County council, were on Monday night hung in effigy to the telegraph poles in the main street of Paris."

It is important to recognize, however, that many of those who opposed prohibition in 1889 did not necessarily reject all forms of legislation designed to control alcohol consumption. Instead, a sizable number simply favoured a more balanced approach by arguing that those who wished to drink should be

free to do so as long as they exercised this freedom in moderation. The views of this latter group were clearly supported by the local media. The following comment appeared in a *Free Press* editorial on May 9, 1889.

We have always held, and hold to-day that it is a base and detestable infringement on the liberty of the individual citizen to compel him to refrain from the use of any kind of food - be it liquid or solid - that comports with his own estimation of what is necessary to his health....The use of beer and of native wine in this country is not productive of intemperance or rather of intoxication, except when taken in very unusual and unnecessary quantities.<sup>44</sup>

The *Free Press* was so opposed to the total prohibition of all alcoholic beverages that it even inserted a notice in the paper on May 9<sup>th</sup> to ensure that its readers knew exactly how to vote during the poll to be held the next day.

On May 10<sup>th</sup> the *London Advertiser* published the preliminary results of the vote. In London East and London West combined, 328 citizens voted in support of repeal and no one voted against. Moreover, of the 23 Middlesex townships listed in the *Advertiser*, all of the electors in 21 of the townships voted for repeal.

# THE SCOTT ACT.

## How to Vote To-morrow

Under the law as it now exists voting is to be done by ballot with the words "Against the Act" in red letters and "For the Act" in black letters

Electors, go like men to the polls, uninfluenced by any false assertions or figures or arguments that are intended to apply to your judgment. Mark you ballot in the top section against the Act thus:

<b>Against the Act.</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>For the Act.</b>	

The words, "Against the Act," are printed in **RED LETTERS**, so that no mistake ought to be made.

Only in Lobo and Nissouri-West were the electors unanimous in voting against repeal. The final outcome for Middlesex County as a whole, as reported in Spence's report<sup>45</sup> was 5,530 in favour of repeal and 2,992 opposed. This outcome was repeated throughout most of the rest of the province. In commenting on these results the *Advertiser* correctly claimed that in Ontario "To all intents and purposes the Scott Act is dead." In essence, it is fair to say that the moderates who cast the deciding votes in the 1889 poll felt it would be more appropriate to grant local control over

excessive drinking (1) though licencing to limit the number of taverns and (2) through restrictions on the tavern owners with respect to who they should be permitted to serve and when they should be allowed to operate.

In keeping with this call for local control, two years after the 1889 poll a further poll was taken in London with regard to the issue of licencing. This time the citizens were asked to vote on a bylaw that called for a reduction in the number of liquor licences to be issued by the city. On January 3, 1891, the *Advertiser* expressed its opinion on this matter in the following editorial.

No elector can refuse to vote on the question of whether or not the licences to sell liquor shall be reduced from 69 to 50...Though many public meetings have been held, [and] though ample opportunity has been given to the opponents of licence reduction to state their views, not a voice has been raised against the proposed curtailment of opportunities to drink...Only one or two anonymous writers have undertaken to argue that the change would not be in the public interest...The argument, therefore, seems to be all on the side of those who advocate a reduction. If they poll their full strength, the bylaw will undoubtedly be sustained.

Several days later the *Advertiser* reported the results of this poll. The number in London that voted in favour (2,725) clearly exceeded the number that voted against (1,950) which meant that now nearly thirty per cent fewer taverns would be permitted to operate in the city.

Along with granting local control over licencing, the licencing laws themselves were also strengthened to safeguard the public through several subsequent acts approved by the Ontario Legislative Assembly in 1902 and 1906, respectively. The following are some of the restrictions that were placed on the tavern owners.

The sale of liquor shall not take place from or after the hour of seven of the clock on Saturday night until six of the clock on (the) Monday morning thereafter... During weekdays taverns in villages must close at 10:00 p.m., and in cities at 11:00 p.m. Taverns were not to reopen until 6:00 a.m. the following day. Taverns were also to be closed during any day on which a poll is being held...

No person other than the father, mother, guardian or a duly qualified medical practitioner shall give liquor to any person under the age of twenty-one years and then only for medicinal purposes.

If any person authorized to sell liquor knowingly supplies any liquor or refreshment whatever...to any constable or police officer on duty, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act.

Whenever any person has drunk liquor to excess and while in a state of intoxication from such drinking has come to his death by suicide, or drowning, or perishing from cold or other accident caused by such

intoxication, the person or persons who furnished the liquor to such person...shall be liable to an action for a wrongful act...

The husband, wife, parent, child of twenty-one years or upwards, brother, sister, master, guardian, or employer, of any person who has the habit of drinking liquor to excess...may give notice in writing...to any person licenced to sell liquor of any kind, not to deliver liquor to the person having such habit.

In view of these safeguards, it would seem that the need for prohibition would now have been laid to rest. Such was not the case, however. Only nine years after the 1889 repeal of the Scott Act another referendum was held in Ontario to gauge public opinion and this time 278,487 people voted in favour of prohibition while 264,571 voted against. Then in 1902 the outcome of still another referendum showed that a majority of 96,210 voted in favour and in the rural areas of Ontario prohibition was almost entirely adopted.<sup>46</sup> While it is not entirely clear why this change in attitude took place, some have suggested that the clergy along with the WCTU were largely responsible for the view that only through the total elimination of all alcoholic beverages would the problems associated with excessive drinking be eliminated.<sup>47</sup> Regardless of the reason for the change, it is very clear as a result of the number of polls conducted since the early 1880s, that prohibition had remained an extremely divisive issue within the province from the early 1880s through the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Stimulated by these shifts in attitude it is not surprising that shortly after the start of the First World War, still a further call for the total elimination of alcohol was brought to the fore by the temperance movement. It is worth noting that this time the rationale in favour of prohibition had little to do with the reasons advanced by the movement in support of the 1878 Scott Act (see page 47). Instead, the new rationale was based solely on the need to support the troops abroad.

It was now argued that grain was needed for food and should not be wasted in the production of liquor. It was argued that drinking only reduced alertness and efficiency and thus was detrimental to the war effort. Furthermore, with men giving their lives in Europe, it was argued that it was surely not asking too much for those at home to surrender their liquor at least for the duration.<sup>48</sup>

This rationale was so convincing that, unlike before, the *Free Press* now fully supported the need for total prohibition. The following editorial appeared on April 26, 1916, which was the day before this latest attempt at prohibition was to be fully implemented in Ontario.

Opponents of prohibition as well as its friends will, if they are good citizens, join heartily in giving to it the fullest measure of support ...There are many no doubt who believe that prohibition is an infringement upon personal liberty, and who would resent it were they not met by the argument that these

are unusual times. The Government has provided for the taking of a vote of the people upon prohibition at a time subsequent to the close of the war. Until that time comes, the interests of all concerned will best be served by a careful and dutiful observance of the prohibitory act that comes into effect (at midnight) tonight.

Thus, on April 27, 1916 the Legislative Assembly launched the *Ontario Temperance Act*, which closely resembled the Scott Act in that it called for the closing of all bars, clubs and shops for the duration of the war. Liquor would be sold, however, for medicinal, mechanical, scientific and sacramental purposes. Liquor could not be kept in hotels, clubs, offices, places of business, boarding houses and so forth, but only in proper homes.<sup>49</sup>

Although it was possible to repeal this act shortly after the end of the war if the citizens wished to do so, the 1916 Act was not repealed until the Legislative Assembly approved a replacement act in 1927. For the most part, the rationale cited in support of repeal was the same as that given in support of repeal of the Scott Act, though, several other reasons were also put forward.<sup>50</sup> First, it was feared that the level of crime that had accompanied prohibition in the States (which began in 1920), would soon emerge in Ontario if the law was not repealed. Second, there was the added concern over the disrespect for the prohibition laws in Ontario which, it was said, could lead to the violation of many other Ontario laws. Indeed, the local press had often reported incidences of bootlegging, border violations, and arrests that resulted from the illegal sale of liquor.



For example on March 5, 1927, the *London Evening Free Press* reported a raid on a home in London where it was suspected that the occupant was making liquor for sale, which was illegal. The raid was prompted by the fact that the person involved “was convicted nearly two years ago” on that exact same charge “and was penalized in accordance with the law.” In a further story one month later the *Free Press* reported that “strong beer, ostensibly shipped for export to the United States [which was legal <sup>51</sup>] had been supplied to quite a number of Toronto hotels [which was illegal] by the Cosgrove Brewery” in Toronto. Finally, it was argued that because Quebec did not have similar laws prohibiting consumption, Ontario was sacrificing revenue that it could otherwise gain from American tourism since it was losing tourists to its sister province where alcohol was far more accessible.

In addition to these arguments, and in order to fully understand the rationale behind the 1927 replacement act, it is also important to consider the results of a 1924 Ontario referendum conducted, once more, to gauge public opinion on whether or not to support prohibition. While the outcome revealed that 34, 031 still favoured prohibition, this time the number in favour only represented three per cent of the total number of votes cast.<sup>52</sup> Hence, the best that can be said is that the population as a whole was almost equally divided on the question of whether or not prohibition was truly desirable.

To placate the needs of those who still demanded a return to prohibition while, at the same time, honouring the needs of those who wished to drink, but in moderation, the Legislative Assembly was forced to produce an act which was a compromise solution. This solution was

embodied in *An Act to regulate and control the Sale of Liquor in Ontario* which received final assent on April 5, 1927. The manner by which the act was designed to meet the needs of both groups was explained in several articles that appeared in the *Free Press* immediately after the bill received first reading in March. The following points from the *Free Press*<sup>53</sup> captured the major highlights of the new regulations

To satisfy the prohibitionists, and in keeping with the 1916 Act, liquor could not be legally consumed in a public place, which was defined as any place, building or convenience to which the public had access, [nor] any highway, street, lane, park or place of public resort or amusement. Also, liquor was not to be sold by the glass or with meals in hotels anywhere in the province. On the other hand, to satisfy those who wished to drink in moderation, liquor could be consumed in a residence defined as any building or part of a building [such as a hotel room] or place [a house or even a tent] where a person resides...

In addition, and again to satisfy the moderates, liquor could now be purchased by the bottle from a government authorized Liquor Control Board shop of which there would be two classes, one class selling a complete line of liquors, including beers and wines and the other class selling beer and wines alone. It was anticipated that London would be allowed two shops. Also, the purchaser must be at least 21 years of age, a resident of Ontario, and to satisfy the prohibitionists, would need



a permit which must be renewed on a yearly basis but could be cancelled for misbehaviour. Permits were available from the Liquor Control Board. Finally, to address the matter of tourism and its loss to Quebec, transient visitors would also be allowed to obtain a permit, good for one month, and the price of beer was set sufficiently low to be competitive with the price charged in Quebec.

Considered together, these provisions meant that prohibition was not totally eliminated in 1927, as some have suggested<sup>54</sup> but was still enforced though in a modified form. George Ferguson, who was premier at the time, summarized this attempt to satisfy the demands of both groups with these words:

May I suggest that we should exercise self-restraint and control with respect to the new liquor law...The man who does not obey the law, as enacted, deserves no sympathy when he breaks it. The public said they wanted an opportunity to obtain spirits upon reasonable terms. They have that opportunity now, and are going to get nothing more. There is going to be no leaks and no laxity. I am convinced we have on the statute books of Ontario the best law for handling the liquor problem that exists anywhere on the globe.<sup>55</sup>

Initially it was anticipated that the shops run by the Liquor Control Board where beer, wine, and liquor could be purchased would open around May 1<sup>st</sup>. Because of the complexity of this

undertaking, however, it was not until June 1 that the first shop opened in London at 419-425 Talbot Street. According to the media, George Venner, of 233 Clarence Street, made the first purchase and apparently did so following an approved procedure.

At 12 minutes after 10:00 o'clock he walked proudly out of the store, carrying a bottle of Burke's Irish whisky under one arm and a bottle of Sandy MacDonald's Scotch under the other...Under the new act the procedure in getting a bottle is changed considerably. Order slips are supplied to the customer. Pink slips are for mail orders and white for cash and carry. Price lists are supplied. The customer selects what he wants from the list, places the name and the price on his order slip, writes his permit number in the space allotted for it and hands it to a clerk for a stamp. Then the slip and the permit are taken to the censor at the first wicket for checking purposes. Next, the customer goes to the cashier, pays his money and has his slip stamped....From there the customer lines up at the counter to get his supply.<sup>56</sup>

How was the Act greeted by the public? When the bill was first introduced on March 9 there was considerable enthusiasm:

For two hours and a half, as many spectators as could crowd into the galleries and about the floor of the Assembly had sat patiently through discussions of routine legislation ...Indeed, hundreds were standing about the walls of the chamber and in

the galleries. When the King's printer furnished proofs of the bill, the house was in committee and the minute hand of the big clock in the chamber was climbing toward six when Premier Ferguson rose to move first reading. For two full minutes deafening applause swept the chamber, from the ministerial corner clear around to the edge of the Opposition ranks. When it finally died, in deference to Mr. Fergusons's uplifted hand, it was immediately renewed by the four Liberal members who support the control measure.<sup>57</sup>

Although it was quite apparent from the outset that many supported the Act, there were also those who were not enthusiastic. Rev. Ben H. Spence, a strong supporter of the temperance movement and of prohibition, said that "The bill is not as bad as it might have been and that is the best praise I can give it...So far as the bill restricts the sale of liquor it may be good, but insofar as it permits the sale of liquor it is bad. The evil does not exist in the method of handling, but in the stuff handled." Similarly, the Rev. John Coburn of the Social Service Department of the United Church of Canada asked if "tourists who get permits [will] be allowed to drink their liquor in autos on the highway?... If so, I can see very serious trouble ahead..." William Varley, of the Toronto Building Trades, expressed his disappointment "at the lack of beer sale by the glass [since] there will never be true temperance in the province until the working man is permitted to purchase in this way."<sup>58</sup> Mrs. Gordon Wright, who spoke to a group of 20 new members of the WCTU at the Calvary United Church in London had the

following to say: "While no WCTU member would break the law... the WCTU should in no way sponsor Government control, but should look ahead to a day when a more prohibitory law would be drafted."<sup>59</sup>

Despite the fact that Ferguson felt the 1927 Act represented the best solution that could be crafted by the Ontario Legislative Assembly to resolve the drinking problem, from these few remarks it is clear that the Act did not completely satisfy the needs of either group. Thus, it is not surprising that a review of the Assembly's records after 1927 showed that the Act was amended at least 15 times over the next 19 years. While the majority of the amendments were minor, several were substantial.

On April 3, 1934 the Legislative Assembly granted permission under Section 69a of the Liquor Control Act "for the sale of beer and wine or beer or wine in standard hotels and in such other premises as the regulations may provide..." The term "other premises" meant clubs established by recognized labour unions and by recognized war veteran's organizations (see Section 69f). Permission to sell wine and beer, however, was still strictly limited in that wine could only be served by the glass with meals in hotels and the Board reserved the right to "specify the rooms or places therein to which the sale, serving and consumption of beer [by the glass] shall be restricted and confined" (see Section 69c).

The next change took place following the end of World War II. On April 5, 1946, the Legislative Assembly approved two major acts. One of the acts contained a further amendment to the Liquor Control Act while the other entailed the introduction of The Liquor Licence Act. The amendment to the Liquor Control Act was particularly

creative because the original Act prohibited the sale of any intoxicating beverages to individuals less than 21 years of age. In anticipation of many returning veterans, who could be under 21 and were likely to frequent war veteran's organizations that previously had been granted permission to sell beer, this age restriction had to be addressed. To deal with this matter the following amendment was made to Section 162 of the original Liquor Control Act.

For the purposes of this Act a member of the naval, military or air forces of Canada who having been placed on active service or called out for training, service or duty...shall be deemed to be twenty-one years of age or over.

In other words, the government simply raised the age, by legislative decree, of those who served the military and were under 21, so that now they would be over 21 and therefore allowed to drink without violating the law.

The act that produced the most far reaching consequences, however, was the Liquor Licence Act. According to this act, the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario was now permitted to "issue banquet or entertainment permits for the serving of liquor on designated premises for special occasions..." The Act also made it possible for the public to obtain liquor in taverns, hotels, clubs, military messes, railway cars and steamships as long as these establishments had a licensed dining lounge, dining room or lounge. The same was true of restaurants. While there were many other provisions under the Act, and for the most part it was still up to local jurisdictions to determine whether they wished to abide by these provisions, it is fair to say that this Act finally marked the end of

prohibition because it contained few restrictions and therefore it enabled the public to purchase alcoholic beverages whenever and wherever they pleased.

But did the Act also mark the end of the temperance movement? A lengthy article published in the media in 1946<sup>60</sup> summarized the outpouring of indignation advanced by the Ontario Temperance Federation over the passage of this Act. Speaking before the annual meeting of the London and Middlesex branch of the Federation at the Talbot Street Baptist Church in London, Rev. Albert Johnson, general secretary of the Federation, in commenting on the march of the temperance workers on Queens Park, stated that the march "was a spontaneous outburst of indignation at the Government's new liquor legislation. No power in Toronto could have prevented the temperance supporter's demonstration..." He called on temperance workers in the province:

...to make chronic alcoholics...the last word in victimization by the liquor traffic - the king-pin of a new campaign to improve conditions...It is my belief we must set the province's estimated 20,000 alcoholics as the centre of our program...Ours has been called a pressure group. We are a pressure group, and we will continue pressing for restrictions of the liquor traffic in this province. It is a proven fact that the absence of restrictions boosts the liquor consumption. We want the problem solved, total abstinence is one way.

Although membership in the various temperance organizations had declined over the years, these remarks by Rev. Johnson

clearly revealed a single-minded tenacity to pursue the aim of total abstinence by those who remained devoted to this cause. Despite their efforts, however, this aim had also become diluted over the years. The WCTU, for instance, was involved in many other issues such as drug abuse, the prevention of violence against women, and the establishment of homes for abandoned and aged women.<sup>61</sup> Hence, as the struggle for total abstinence became increasingly less attainable, other social issues gradually assumed a more dominant role among the remaining members of the temperance organizations.<sup>62</sup>

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>*The London Free Press and Daily Western Advertiser*, December 15, 1864, p. 3, c.2.

<sup>2</sup>Richardson, Mark (2005). *On the Beat: 150 Years of Policing in London Ontario*. London, ON: London Police Services.

<sup>3</sup>Campbell, T. (1911). The settlement of London. *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Historical Society*, 9-15. Garland, M.A. & Talman, J.J. (1931). Pioneer drinking habits and the rise of the temperance agitation in Upper Canada prior to 1840. *Ontario Historical Society Papers and Records*, Vol. 27, pp. 3-21.

<sup>4</sup>*Canadian Free Press*, July 31, 1849, p. 3, c. 6.

<sup>5</sup>"The Proudfoot Papers." *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Historical Society*, 1915, Part VI, p. 62.

<sup>6</sup>Addington, C. (1991). *A History of the London Police Force*. London, ON: Phelps Publishing Company

<sup>7</sup>Spence, F.S. (1896). *Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic*. Toronto, ON: Newton and Treloar (Facsimile edition published by Coles Publishing Company, Toronto.)

<sup>8</sup>Richardson, Mark (2005). *On the Beat: 150 Years of Policing in London Ontario*. London, ON: London Police Services, p. 14.

<sup>9</sup>*London Free Press and Daily Western Advertiser*, November 7, 1864, p. 3, c. 1.

<sup>10</sup>*London Free Press and Daily Western Advertiser*, September 21, 1864, p. 3, c. 2.

<sup>11</sup>*London Free Press and Daily Western Advertiser*, October 21, 1864, p. 3, c. 2.

<sup>12</sup>*London Free Press and Daily Western Advertiser*, November 26, 1864, p. 3, c. 2.

<sup>13</sup>*London Advertiser*, January 3, 1891, p. 1, c. 6.

<sup>14</sup>*Canadian Free Press*, March 1849, p. 3, c. 2.

<sup>15</sup>*London free Press and Daily Western Advertiser*, April 7, 1863, p.3, c. 3.

<sup>16</sup>Webster, Thomas (1874). *The Book of Laws of the Sons of Temperance of North America*. Toronto, ON: Hunter, Rose & Company, pp. 23-24.

<sup>17</sup>While the focus of this report is on the four major temperance organizations in London, it is worth mentioning that there were also several unaffiliated temperance societies that, over time, developed a reasonably large local following. The London Band of Hope had about 120 members and met every Wednesday evening in the Congregational schoolroom on King Street. The Red Ribbon Reform Club was managed by a board of five directors, had a reading room, lecture room, billiard room and smoking room over the Chamber of Commerce on Dundas Street. The Club also had a large tent with a seating capacity of 800 that was used for services on Sundays and for entertainment during the week. In addition, The Father Mathew Temperance Society met every Tuesday evening in St. Peters School on the southwest corner of Clarence and Bond Street and there was a temperance group affiliated with the Young Men's Christian Association that met during the fall and winter months in the Albion Buildings. Unfortunately, because less is known about the overall impact of these other organizations, for the purpose of this report, the decision was made to focus only on the Sons of Temperance, the Independent

Order of Good Templars, the British American Order of Good Templars, and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

<sup>18</sup>Dannenbaum, Jed (1984). *Drink and Disorder*. Chicago, ILL: University of Illinois Press.

<sup>19</sup>*Constitution, Laws and Rules of Order for the Government of the Subordinate Divisions of the Sons of Temperance* (1888). Published by the National Division of North America, p. 5.

<sup>20</sup>*Constitution, Laws and Rules of Order for the Government of the Subordinate Divisions of the Sons of Temperance* (1888). Published by the National Division of North America, p. 7.

<sup>21</sup>*Blue Book for the use of Subordinate Divisions of the Order of the Sons of Temperance* (1906). Part I. Published by the National Division of North America.

<sup>22</sup>Webster, Thomas (1874). *The Book of Laws of the Sons of Temperance of North America*. Toronto, ON: Hunter, Rose & Company, pp. 20-21.

<sup>23</sup>*Constitution, Laws and Rules of Order for the Government of the Subordinate Divisions of the Sons of Temperance* (1888). Published by the National Division of North America, pp. 10-11.

<sup>24</sup>Johnson, W.S. (1923). *Odd Fellowship in Ontario Up To 1923*. Toronto, ON: The Maccoomb Press.

<sup>25</sup>Lawless, Thomas (1875a). History, *The Canada Digest, IOGT*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed). Hamilton, ON, p. 125.

<sup>26</sup>Lawless, Thomas (1875a). History, *The Canada Digest, IOGT*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed). Hamilton, ON, p.133.

<sup>27</sup>Lawless, Thomas (1875b). R.W.G. Lodge Constitution, *The Canada Digest, IOGT*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed). Hamilton, ON, pp. 50-61.

<sup>28</sup>*British American Order of Good Templars: The Documents, Reasons and Proceedings connected with the Formation of the Said Order* (1858). London, ON: Published by James Gillelan. p. 11.

<sup>29</sup>*Juvenile Ritual containing the Opening, Initiation, Installation, Funeral and Closing Ceremonies...* (1870). Stratford, ON: W. Buckingham Printer and Stationer.

<sup>30</sup>Cook, S.A. (1995). *The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism, and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930*. Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queens University Press.

<sup>31</sup>McKee, S.G.E. (1927). *Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union\_1877-1927*. Whitby, ON: C.A. Goodfellow and Son.

<sup>32</sup>McKee, S.G.E. (1927). *Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union\_1877-1927*. Whitby, ON: C.A. Goodfellow and Son, p. 12.

<sup>33</sup>Richardson, B.W. (1887) *Public School Temperance*. Toronto, ON: The Grip Printing and Publishing Company.

<sup>34</sup>Richardson, B.W. (1887) *Public School Temperance*. Toronto, ON: The Grip Printing and Publishing Company, pp. 65-66.

<sup>35</sup>Richardson, B.W. (1887) *Public School Temperance*. Toronto, ON: The Grip Printing and Publishing Company, p. 91.

<sup>36</sup>*Woman's Christian Temperance Union 1878-1978 London Centennial*. London, ON, p. 3 (Available in the London Room, London Public Libraries.)

<sup>37</sup>*London Free Press and Daily Western Advertiser*, October 3, 1864, p. 3 c. 2; October 5, 1864, p.3, c. 2.

<sup>38</sup>*London Free Press and Daily Western Advertiser*, April 1, 1863, p. 3, c. 1.

<sup>39</sup>Spence, Ruth Elizabeth (1919). *Prohibition in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Branch of the Dominion Alliance, pp. 105-107.

<sup>40</sup>Spence, Ruth Elizabeth (1919). *Prohibition in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Branch of the Dominion Alliance, p. 124.

<sup>41</sup>Spence, Francis Stephens (1896). *Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic*. Toronto, ON: Newton and Treloar (Facsimile edition published by Coles Publishing Company, Toronto, pp. 154-157)

<sup>42</sup>Spence, Francis Stephens (1896). *Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic*. Toronto, ON: Newton and Treloar (Facsimile edition published by Coles Publishing Company, Toronto, pp. 160-161).



<sup>43</sup>Spence, Francis Stephens (1896). *Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic*. Toronto, ON: Newton and Treloar (Facsimile edition published by Coles Publishing Company, Toronto, p. 162).

<sup>44</sup>In addition to being an infringement on freedom of choice, one other objection given by the *Free Press* for opposing prohibition was the outright ban on beer. In many of the areas surrounding London water was obtained from nearby streams and wells which were often contaminated leading to serious if not fatal illnesses. In fact in May, 1885, the *Free Press* even published several articles that dealt with a water related epidemic that affected more than 2,000 residences in an area around Plymouth, Pennsylvania. The cause of the epidemic was traced to human excretions that had seeped into the head waters of the stream from which the affected downstream residences normally obtained their water. Since beer had always been considered a healthy alternative to well water and streams, it is quite likely that the editors of *Free Press* had this epidemic in mind when they criticised the government for banning beer thereby forcing people to rely upon water to satisfy their everyday drinking needs.

<sup>45</sup>Spence, Francis Stephens (1896). *Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic*. Toronto, ON: Newton and Treloar (Facsimile edition published by Coles Publishing Company, Toronto, p. 156).

<sup>46</sup>Hopkins, J. C. (1919) *The Province of Ontario in the War*. Toronto, ON: Warwick and Rutter.

<sup>47</sup>Hallowell, G.A. (1972). *Prohibition in Ontario*. Ottawa, ON: Ontario Historical Society. Schull, J. (1978). *Ontario since 1867*. Toronto, ON: McClelland and Stewart.

<sup>48</sup>Tennyson, B.D. (1963). Sir William Hearst and the Ontario Temperance Act. *Ontario History*, Vol. LV, No. 4, pp. 233-245.

<sup>49</sup>Tennyson, B.D. (1963). Sir William Hearst and the Ontario Temperance Act. *Ontario History*, Vol. LV, No. 4, p. 241.

<sup>50</sup>Hallowell, G.A. (1972). *Prohibition in Ontario*. Ottawa, ON: Ontario Historical Society.

<sup>51</sup>”Six distilleries and twenty-nine breweries within Ontario operated almost undisturbed throughout the prohibition era. These establishments, licenced by the federal government, had the right to manufacture liquor and to sell it for export from the province” (Hallowell, 1972, p. 117).

<sup>52</sup>See note 23 on page 256 in Cook, 1995.

<sup>53</sup>*The Free Press*, March 10, 1927, p. 12, c. 2.

<sup>54</sup>Cook, S.A. (1995). *The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism, and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930*. Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queens's University Press.

<sup>55</sup>*The Free Press*, May 7, 1927, p. 3, c 7.

<sup>56</sup>*London Evening Free Press*, June 1, 1927, p.1, c. 8.

<sup>57</sup>*The Free Press*, March 10, 1927, p. 12, c. 1.

<sup>58</sup>*The London Evening Free Press*, March 8, 1927, p 1, c. 3.

<sup>59</sup>*The Free Press*, March 12, 1927, p. 4, c. 3.

<sup>60</sup>*The Free Press*, April 5, 1946, p. 2, c. 3.

<sup>61</sup>Cook, S.A. (1995). *The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism, and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930*. Montreal, Quebec: McGill-Queens's University Press.

<sup>62</sup>For a thorough discussion of the events that took place in Ontario between 1927 and the mid-1940s, see Malleck, D. (2012). *Try to Control Yourself: The Regulation of Public Drinking in Post-Prohibition Ontario, 1927-1944*. Vancouver, BC: The University of British Columbia Press.